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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 STATE 090378

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SUBJECT: TFGG01: GEORGIA TASK FORCE SITUATION REPORT  
NO. 31

CLASSIFIED BY: MARIO MESQUITA, S/ES-O, REASONS 1.4 (B)  
AND (D)

RUSSIAN DEFENSE MINISTER SAYS FORCES TO WITHDRAW  
AUGUST 22

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1. (U) Defense Minister Serdyukov said Russian troops would begin to withdraw into South Ossetia at 0600 local time, and be completed by the end of the day. 500 "peacekeepers" would remain in the "security zone." The withdrawing forces would depart South Ossetia for Russia over the next ten days.  
(newsru.com)

2. (S/NF) Intelligence confirms first small Russian elements withdrawing from South Ossetia into Russia.  
(U.S. Military Georgia Storyboard 212000EDT)

RUSSIA CLAIMS GEORGIAN FORCES FIRING ON DEPARTING  
TROOPS

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¶3. (SBU) Russian Deputy Foreign Minister (DFM) Ryabkov said Georgian forces had opened fire on departing Russian troops in Gori, jeopardizing their ability to withdraw, reports Embassy Moscow. Georgian DFM Vashadze told Embassy Tbilisi there are no Georgian forces between the Roki Tunnel and Gori. (TF/Embassy Moscow/Embassy Tbilisi e-mail)

FRANCE SOFT ON TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, OSCE MONITORS

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¶4. (S/NF) In P-3 consultations August 21 in New York, France sought to soften UNSCR language on Georgian territorial integrity. France also sought explicit language referring to the readiness of the EU and OSCE to contribute to the international mechanism. (TF/USUN e-mail)

¶5. (C) French MFA official says new OSCE monitors are a "preliminary" measure to meet the emergency situation, not the international mechanism referred to in point 5. (Paris 1616)

EUCOM EXPECTS U.S. TO HELP REBUILD GEORGIAN MILITARY

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¶6. (U) After meeting with President Saakashvili in Tbilisi August 21, Gen. Craddock predicted U.S. aid for Georgia's military. (AFP, IHT, Reuters)

GROWING PUBLIC INTEREST IN AMCIT CASES

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¶7. (SBU) AmCits Sofiya and Mike Momtselidze (ages 17 & 24) have been unable to depart western Georgia. The two are with relatives and not in danger; Embassy Tbilisi has maintained contact with them since August ¶14. Local media in Kansas is reporting the story; Representative Moore (D-KS) will call Ambassador Tefft August 22. (TF/Embassy Tbilisi e-mail)

¶8. (U) Minimize considered.  
RICE